# WHAT IS EDRS?

The primary purpose of an EDRS is to enable the participants of death registration to file death records with local and state registrars via the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week. An EDRS provides for on-line access so that decedent fact-of-death and cause-of-death information can be registered via the Internet by multiple death registration participants working on the same case. With an EDRS, the ability to report cause-of-death with increased accuracy and timeliness can be an integral part of patient care and will also improve cause-of-death data for disease surveillance systems.

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
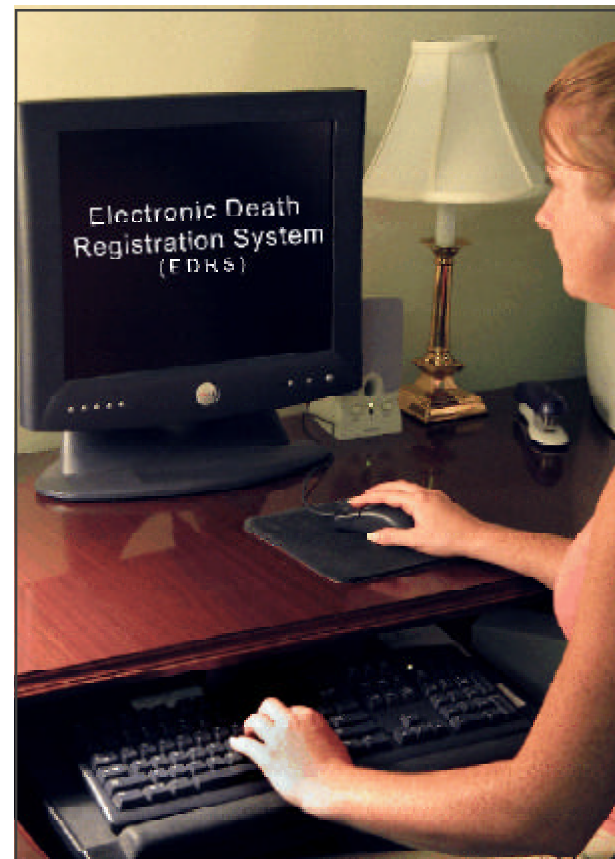


5/20/2004



# South Carolina's Electronic Death Registration System

## What Medical Certifiers Should Know
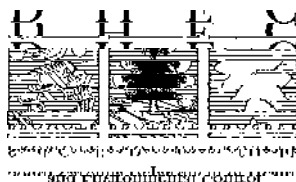
# Potential Benefits of the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS)

- Provides for paperless filing of a death record

- Facilitates on-line collaboration among multiple death registration system users, including funeral homes, hospitals, nursing homes, physicians, medical examiners, coroners and local and state registrars

- Supports the completion and filing of a death record that is partially an electronic record and partially a paper certificate if all participants are not on-line

- Improves the timeliness and quality of cause-of-death reporting by providing real-time edits

- Saves time and effort by enabling death certificate completion electronically

- Reduces errors in and rejection of death certificates

- Promotes uniformity in cause-of-death statistics

- Includes instructions for filling out the cause-of-death

- Improves cause-of-death data provided to electronic disease surveillance systems

- Enables faster death registration at the Vital Records office, which will reduce turn around time for obtaining certified copies for families

- Improves fraud prevention by using electronic authentication
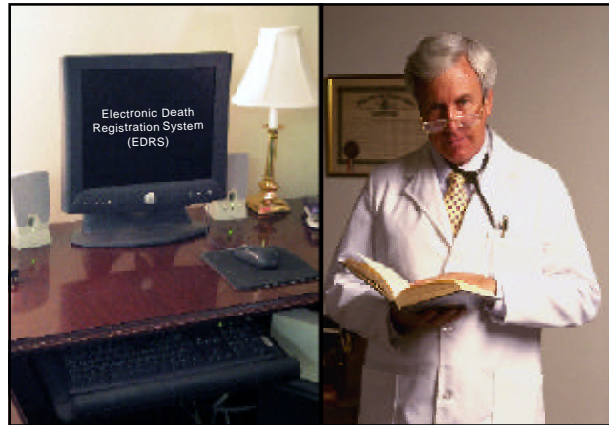


- Automates the referral to the medical examiner and/or coroner when necessary

- Provides for electronic submission of supplemental cause-of-death information for pending investigations by the medical examiner and/or coroner

## Features of the EDRS

- User-friendly data entry screens
- Highly secure Internet transmission
- Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Accommodates hospitals, nursing homes, private physician practices, medical examiners and coroners.
- On-line help and instructions built into the system
- Help desk support for users

## American Medical Association (AMA) Resolution

In 2002 the AMA House of Delegates adopted a resolution sponsored by the American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) related to improving the reporting of cause-of-death. This resolution calls for the following four measures:

1. Emphasize to the medical community that precise cause-of-death reporting is critical.

2. Work with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), as well as state medical associations, to ensure use of uniform cause-of-death terminology.

3. Educate state legislators on the importance of uniformity in mortality statistics so research dollars may be appropriately disbursed.

4. Train physicians in medical schools, residency programs and continuing medical education courses on how to fill out a death certificate. This may require AMA to partner with the Association of American Medical Colleges to create a death certificate curriculum.

## South Carolina Coroner's Association

The following is an excerpt from a letter received from the President of the South Carolina Coroner's Association:

*"....The South Carolina Coroner's Association will work closely with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to ensure that the EDRS project is successful and will encourage participation by each of its members."*